REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 12-22, 30-50, 53-59, 61-72, 75-78, 80-83, 85-88 and 95-97 were pending and presented for examination and in this application. In an Office Action dated September 12, 2007, claims 1-10, 12-22, 30-50, 53-59, 61-72, 75-78, 80-83, 85-88 and 95-97 were rejected.

Claims 1, 30, 53 and 85 are amended in this Amendment and Response. No claims are cancelled or added. Reconsideration of all outstanding objections and rejections, and withdraw them, is requested.

Claims 1-10, 12-15, 17-19, 21, 22, 30-45, 48-50, 53-59, 61-63, 65, 68-72, 75-68, 80-83 and 85-88 Not Obvious in View of Rukman, Walsh, Beck, White and O'Connor

Claims 1-10, 13-15, 17, 18, 21, 22, 30-45, 48-50, 53-59, 61-63, 65, 68-72, 75-78, 80-83, 85-89 and 95-97 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0185883 to Rukman ("Rukman"), U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0114174 to Walsh et al. ("Walsh") and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0025309 to Macleod Beck et al. ("Beck"), U.S. Patent No. 6,941,134 to White ("White") and U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0185379 to O'Connor et al. ("O'Connor"). This rejection is now traversed in view of the amended claims.

Amended claim 1 recites:

> A method for displaying a plurality of related SMS (Short Message Service) messages comprising:
>
> reviewing a plurality of SMS messages associated with a first party;
>
> determining whether to thread one or more SMS messages from the plurality of SMS messages into an SMS message thread by applying a set of incoming SMS message rules to incoming SMS messages, the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an

> incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number, and applying a set of outgoing SMS message rules to outgoing SMS messages, the set of outgoing SMS message rules associating an outgoing SMS message with one or more threads including one or more SMS messages, wherein the outgoing SMS message rules are different from the incoming SMS message rules and the one or more SMS messages are also associated with a second party; and
>
> outputting the SMS message thread displaying a relationship between two or more SMS messages. (emphasis added)

The claimed invention displays related Short Message Service (SMS) messages as a message thread. Initially, a plurality of SMS messages associated with a first party are reviewed. A determination is made whether to thread one or more SMS messages, also associated with a second party, from the plurality of SMS messages. A set of incoming SMS message rules are applied to incoming SMS messages and a set of outgoing SMS message rules, which are different from the incoming SMS message rules, are applied to outgoing SMS messages to determine whether to thread SMS messages. The incoming SMS message rules associate an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the message thread, which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and associated with the second telephone number. The outgoing SMS message rules associate an outgoing SMS message with one or more threads including one or more SMS messages. The resulting SMS message thread is then output, allowing SMS messages from a contact to be viewed in a single thread displaying a relationship between two or more SMS messages, even when the messages originate from different telephone numbers.

Incorporating SMS messages from a first telephone number and a second telephone number into a single message thread associated with a contact simplifies review and retrieval of received SMS messages. Conventionally, SMS messages are identified and organized according to a telephone number sending the SMS message rather than according to the contact sending the SMS message. Using telephone numbers for identification causes separate storage and presentation of messages sent by a single contact from multiple devices. As users may have multiple mobile devices, for example, a mobile device for personal use and a different mobile device for business use, a contact may use mobile devices having different telephone numbers to send messages. Conventional techniques associating messages with the telephone number of the sending device rather than associate the messages with the sending contact, so messages from a single contact are maintained in different location. However, the claimed incoming SMS message rules include received SMS messages in a thread associated with the sending contact, even when the messages originate from different telephone numbers associated with the contact. This allows generation of a thread associated with a contact including messages from multiple telephone numbers associated with the contact, simplifying review and retrieval of incoming SMS messages. The generated thread also shows the relationship between incoming SMS messages from the first telephone number and the second telephone number associated with outgoing SMS messages.

Rukman discloses identifying and organizing related messages using message text, such as the content of a subject line. However, Rukman fails to disclose the claimed element of:

> determining whether to thread one or more SMS messages from the plurality of SMS messages into an SMS message thread by applying a set of incoming SMS message rules to incoming SMS messages, the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second

> telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number, and applying a set of outgoing SMS message rules to outgoing SMS messages, the set of outgoing SMS message rules associating an outgoing SMS message with one or more threads including one or more SMS messages, wherein the outgoing SMS message rules are different from the incoming SMS message rules and the one or more SMS messages are also associated with a second party…(emphasis added)

In contrast to the claimed invention, Rukman uses a single parameter, such as subject text or message time to organize both incoming and outgoing messages. *See* Rukman, ¶ [0028], [0033]-[0034], [0047]. Accordingly, the technique disclosed in Rukman does not associate "an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number," as claimed. Rather, Rukman merely uses a single specified parameter to organize all sent or received messages without determining whether messages are received from a first telephone number or a second telephone number associated with a contact. For example, Rukman uses the contents of the message subject line (e.g., the number of times "RE:" appears in the subject line or a number in the subject line) to organize messages, and does not include incoming messages from a first telephone number or a second telephone number associated with a contact in a single thread, as claimed. *See* Rukman, ¶ [0047].

Walsh also does not disclose the claimed element of:

> determining whether to thread one or more SMS messages from the plurality of SMS messages into an SMS message thread by applying a set of incoming SMS message rules to incoming SMS messages, the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number, and applying a set of

> outgoing SMS message rules to outgoing SMS messages, the set of outgoing SMS message rules associating an outgoing SMS message with one or more threads including one or more SMS messages, wherein the outgoing SMS message rules are different from the incoming SMS message rules and the one or more SMS messages are also associated with a second party….(emphasis added)

Walsh incorporates a message thread identifier into a message and uses the thread identifier to associate the message with a thread. *See* Walsh, Abstract; ¶¶ [0005]-[0006]. Hence, Walsh uses the embedded thread identifier, rather than incoming SMS message rules and outgoing SMS message rules, to organize messages. Embedding this thread identifier incorporates an additional layer of complexity and processing by incorporating additional data elements into messages. Rather than apply incoming message rules to associate "an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number," as claimed, Walsh organizes messages by examining an embedded thread identifier in each message without regard of whether an incoming SMS message is received from a first telephone number or a second telephone number associated with a contact. The thread identifier, rather than association between different telephone numbers and a contact, groups messages in Walsh.

Beck fails to remedy the deficient disclosures of Rukman and Walsh. Specifically, Beck also fails to disclose the claimed feature of:

> determining whether to thread one or more SMS messages from the plurality of SMS messages into an SMS message thread by applying a set of incoming SMS message rules to incoming SMS messages, the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number, and applying a set of outgoing SMS message rules to outgoing SMS messages, the set of

> outgoing SMS message rules associating an outgoing SMS message with one or more threads including one or more SMS messages, wherein the outgoing SMS message rules are different from the incoming SMS message rules and the one or more SMS messages are also associated with a second party…(emphasis added)

Beck discloses a multimedia communication center (MMCC) accepting communication from clients and displaying an interactive self-help wizard in a graphic interface. *See* Beck, ¶¶ [0025]-[0027]. The MMCC disclosed in Beck stores text-based and multimedia-based interactions in a repository for subsequent retrieval and analysis. *See* Beck, ¶¶ [0140]-[0142]. However, Beck merely classifies interactions according to transmission type, such as video phone interactions, e-mails, COST interactions, WEB interactions or video mails, and then classifies interactions of a particular type according to a business rule. *See* Beck, ¶ [162]; [0164]-[0165]. While the claimed invention uses a set of incoming SMS message rules to include incoming SMS messages from a first telephone number and a second telephone number associated with a contact in a thread, Beck merely uniformly applies business rules to all messages to organize messages according to transmission type regardless of the message sender.

Beck, like Walsh, also applies business rules to organize messages of a particular type. In applying business rules, Beck merely assigns an identifier to an interaction and uses the identifier to organize or store the interaction. *See* Beck, ¶ [0159]. Hence, Beck groups both incoming and outgoing interactions according to the presence or absence of an identifier in the interaction without considering the telephone number associated with a received message, much less associating incoming SMS messages from a first telephone number and from a second telephone number with a contact-specific SMS message thread. Beck merely examines an interaction for an identifier and organizes all interactions based on the identifier and type of interaction, regardless of the source of the SMS message. *See* Beck, ¶¶ [0159]-[0165]. Rather

than applying a set of incoming SMS message rules to associate incoming SMS messages from a first telephone number associated with a contact and a second telephone number associated with a contact with a single SMS message thread, Beck merely examines all interactions for a specific identifier and groups interactions based on the assigned thread and interaction type.

White fails to remedy the deficient disclosure of Rukman, Walsh and Beck. Rather, White discloses automatically managing the behavior of a wireless communication device through locally-stored behavior preference settings. White, Abstract. Macro-level preferences are maintained by the wireless communication device and control general device actions or inactions. White, col. 5, lines 3-8. These macro-level preferences maintain lists of approved or banned phone numbers to identify phone numbers, mobile device identifiers, internet protocol addresses or other identifiers specifying sources or locations which are approved or prohibited for communication. White, col. 5, lines 17-35. Hence, these macro-level preferences merely identify sources which are able to communicate with the device or are prohibited from communicating with the device.

Although White shows examples of preferences affecting incoming and outgoing text messages, these preferences merely limit the number of text messages that can be sent or received, regulate transmission of text messages to specific phone numbers or destinations or regulate receipt of text messages from specific phone numbers or sources. White, FIGS. 3, 4; col. 5, lines 39-49. Unlike the claimed incoming SMS message rules and different outgoing SMS message rules, these preferences do not associate "an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number." At most, the preferences in

White prevent transmission of text messages to specific destinations, prevent receipt of text messages from specific or limit transmission or receipt of text messages to a specific number. In contrast, the claimed incoming SMS message rules allow inclusion of incoming SMS messages from a first telephone number associated with a contact and incoming SMS messages from a second telephone number in a single SMS message thread, simplifying communication with the contact. While the claimed invention allows organization of incoming SMS messages based on a contact associated with the SMS messages, White merely prohibits receipt or transmission of SMS messages. Unlike White, the claimed invention associates incoming SMS messages from a multiple telephone numbers associated with a contact with a thread including one or more SMS messages using incoming SMS message rules applied to received messages.

O'Connor fails to remedy the deficient disclosures of Rukman, Walsh, Beck and White. Like Beck and Walsh, O'Connor examines incoming messages for identifiers included in the messages, such as a thread ID number, and uses the identifiers to group messages. O'Connor, ¶ [0119], [0143]. Rather than generate an SMS message thread including one or more SMS messages from a first telephone number associated with a contact and from a second telephone number associated with the contact, O'Connor selects an existing thread for a communication or generates a new thread for the communication based on a thread ID of the communication. O'Connor, ¶ [0143]. As with Beck and Walsh, O'Connor merely examines communications for a thread identifier and incorporates communications into a thread corresponding to a detected thread identifier, regardless of the source of the received communications. At most, O'Connor organizes messages according to an embedded thread identifier in each message without regard of whether an incoming SMS message is received from a first telephone number or a second telephone number associated with a contact.

Even assuming Rukman, Walsh, Beck, White and O'Connor were able to be combined, at best the combined disclosure would provide a system where messages to or from specified numbers could be completely blocked and incoming messages were organized by a single thread identifier and/or message type. This theoretical combined system would be unable to associate incoming SMS messages received from both a first telephone number and a second telephone number with a single SMS message thread including SMS messages from a contact. At most, the combination of references would group messages based on a single embedded message identifier. As none of the references discloses associating SMS messages from different telephone numbers with a thread for a contact associated with both telephone numbers, combining the cited references would not disclose the claimed invention.

Therefore, the cited references, both alone and in combination, fail to disclose at least the claimed element of:

> determining whether to thread one or more SMS messages from the plurality of SMS messages into an SMS message thread by applying a set of incoming SMS message rules to incoming SMS messages, the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the SMS message thread which includes one or more SMS messages from a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number, and applying a set of outgoing SMS message rules to outgoing SMS messages, the set of outgoing SMS message rules associating an outgoing SMS message with one or more threads including one or more SMS messages, wherein the outgoing SMS message rules are different from the incoming SMS message rules and the one or more SMS messages are also associated with a second party…(emphasis added)

Hence, amended claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the cited references, both alone and in combination, so withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

As to the dependent claims, because claims 2-10, 12-15, 17-19, 21, 22 and 68-72 are dependent on claim 1, all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are hereby

incorporated so as to apply to claims 2-10, 12-15, 17-19, 21, 22 and 68-72. Thus, claims 2-10, 12-15, 17-19, 21, 22 and 68-72 are patentable over the cited reference.

Independent claim 30 has been similarly amended to recite:

> a threading rule database a threading rule database including a set of incoming SMS message rules applicable to incoming SMS messages, the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with a thread which includes one or more SMS messages associated with a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number…(emphasis added)

Independent claims 53 and 85 have been similarly amended to recite:

> the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the message thread which includes one or more SMS messages associated with a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number…

These limitations are similar to those described and distinguished over the cited references with respect to claim 1. Therefore, all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are also applicable to claims 30, 53 and 85. Hence, claims 30, 53 and 85 are patentable over the cited references, both alone and in combination.

Claims 31-45, 48-50 and 75-78 depend from claim 30, so all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated so as to apply to claims 31-45, 48-50 and 75-78. Hence claims 31-45, 48-50 and 75-78 are patentable over the cited references, both alone and in combination.

Claims 54-59, 61-63, 65 and 80-83 depend from claim 53, so all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated to as to apply to claims 54-59, 61-63, 65 and 80-83. Hence, claims 54-59, 61-63, 65 and 80-83 are patentable over the cited reference, both alone and in combination.

Claims 86-88 depend from claim 85, so all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated so as to apply to claims 86-88. Hence, claims 86-88 are patentable over the cited references, both alone and in combination.

Hence claims 1-10, 12-15, 17-19, 21, 22, 30-45, 48-50, 53-59, 61-63, 65, 68-72, 75-68, 80-83 and 85-88 are patentable over the cited reference.

Claims 16, 19, 46-47, 64 and 66-67 Not Obvious in View of Rukman, Walsh, Beck, White, O'Connor and Kraft

Claims 16, 19, 46-47, 64 and 66-67 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable in view of Rukman, Walsh, Beck and White in further view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0006889 to Kraft ("Kraft"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As claims 16 and 19 depend from claim 1, all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated so as to apply to claims 16 and 19. As claims 46 and 47 depend from claim 30, all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 30 are hereby incorporated so as to apply to claims 46 and 47. As claims 64, 66 and 67 depend from claim 53, all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 52 are hereby incorporated so as to apply to claims 64, 66 and 67.

Kraft is cited to make up for the combination of Rukman and Walsh's failure to disclose: "a rule to prevent expired SMS messages from being threaded," "displaying an icon in the SMS application to represent a threaded SMS" and "outputting the SMS message thread to an SMS application for display in a threaded format. However, Kraft discloses a method for handling a message exchange session where the message history, or a portion of the message history, is transmitted between terminals during the message exchange session. *See* Kraft, ¶ ¶ [0004]-

[0005]. While the message exchange disclosed in Kraft maintains a history of exchanged messages, it does not disclose the claimed feature of:

> the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the message thread which includes one or more SMS messages associated with a contact associated with the first telephone number and with the second telephone number…

Hence, Kraft does not remedy the deficiencies of Rukman, Walsh, Beck, White and O'Connor.

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, claims 16, 19, 46, 47, 64, 66 and 67 are patentable over the cited references, both alone and in combination.

Claim 20 Not Obvious in View of Rukman, Walsh, Beck, White, O'Connor and Kanefsky

Claim 20 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable in view of Rukman, Walsh, Beck and White in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,799,033 to Kanefsky ("Kanefsky"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As claim 20 depends from claim 1, all arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 are hereby incorporated so as to apply to claim 20.

Kanefsky is cited to make up for the combination of Rukman and Walsh's failure to disclose "the SMS application is a network browser." However, Kanefsky discloses a mobile telephone text messaging device which displays static text from past messages and a message composition field for inputting text. *See* Kanefsky, col. 1, lines 47-65. The mobile telephone text messaging device disclosed in Kanefsky merely displays text from previous messages while a new message is composed and there is no disclosure of "the set of incoming SMS message rules associating an incoming SMS message from a first telephone number and an incoming SMS message from a second telephone number with the message thread which includes one or more SMS messages associated with a contact associated with the first telephone number and

with the second telephone number," as claimed. Hence, Kraft does not remedy the deficiencies of Rukman, Walsh, Beck and White.

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, claim 20 is patentable over the cited references, both alone and in combination.

Conclusion

In sum, claims 1-10, 12-22, 30-50, 53-59, 61-72, 75-78, 80-83, 85-88 and 95-97, as presented herein, are patentably distinguishable over the cited references (including references cited, but not applied). Therefore, reconsideration of the basis for the rejections to these claims and allowance of them is requested.

Respectfully Submitted,
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